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DIE BRIEFE PETRI UND JUDÄ. Völlig neu bearbeitet von D. RUD. KNOPF.
Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, Göttingen. 1912. Pp. 329. 6.40m.

The sixth edition of this volume of the Meyer Series, edited by Kühl, was published in 1897. Its criticism of the three Epistles harmonized with that of the earlier editions of the Meyer Series. The positions taken there were essentially those of Bernard Weiss in his *Der Petrinische Lehrbegriff* and *Theologie des N. T.* First Peter and Jude were maintained to be genuine. The Second Chapter of Second Peter is interpolated into a letter written by the Apostle. First Peter was written to Jewish Christians in Asia Minor, of whose existence this letter is the sole evidence.

The present edition reaches critical conclusions so directly opposite to these as to make the reader ask what the name "Meyer" prefixed to the series stands for. All three letters are pseudepigraphs—First Peter written by a Pauline Christian of the second generation between 90 and 100 A.D., Jude by some unknown believer, perhaps of Syria, between 80 and 100, Second Peter between 150 and 180.

As regards First Peter, the reasons for thinking that the Apostle could not have written it are, (1) the fact that it bears no trace of personal acquaintance with Jesus or of knowledge of his teaching; (2) the mastery of Greek, in respect to which it takes a high place among New Testament writings; (3) the evident influence of the letters of Paul upon its author, apparent not only in his leading thoughts but also in the form of several passages. The last-named fact makes against the theory that the letter is composite; Peter supplying the thoughts and Silvanus or Mark giving them expression. The assumption apparently made in the letter that persecution was beginning in the provinces in which its readers lived, suggests the opening of Domitian's reign as its date. Knopf thinks that the letter was probably written in Asia Minor, and that the greeting in 5:13 from "the fellow-elect in Babylon" (*i.e.*, Rome) was added to strengthen the impression of Petrine authorship.

The date of Jude, Knopf thinks, cannot be precisely determined. The standing it had gained at the beginning of the third century obliges us to place it as early as 150. It contains nothing forbidding our assigning it a much earlier date, even putting it into the first century. As the heresy at which it is aimed seems to have gained a firm foothold in some localities, and to have much in common with the ideas and practices of the Nicolaitans denounced in the Apocalypse, we may believe it to have been written at some time during the last two decades of the century.

Second Peter, which bears plain traces of the influence of Jude, is a Catholic letter written to strengthen the weakening belief of the church in the Parousia. An indication of its date is found in its giving Paul's Epistles a place among the Sacred Scriptures (3 16). "Here the New Testament canon is in plain sight." Our author says that it is much easier to think of such an assertion being made after than before 150. A probable date for the Epistle is 180.

The commentary is written in a free style, with ample use of explanatory historical material, showing in these respects a marked contrast to Kühl's presentation of the letters in the seventh edition. Instead of detached expository comment we find a connected discourse, into which exposition, illustration, and discussion of interpretations differing from the author's are interwoven in a readable context. Those acquainted with Dr. Knopf's *Nachapostolische Zeitalter*, published in 1905, will be reminded of the ample learning and historical tact displayed in that excellent book. A marked feature of the exposition is the use made of the mystery religions in explaining the religious ideas of the readers of First Peter. Knopf differs from Kühl and most other recent commentators in regarding the "spirits in prison," to whom Christ preached after his death (1 Pet. 3 20), not as disembodied human spirits but as the sons of God of Gen. 6 2; thus finding in the passage a modification of the myth told in Enoch 6-11. In 46 the "dead" to whom a preaching was done are men, "the innumerable shades in the wide dark caverns of Hades." "Here appears the proud consciousness which ancient Christianity had of the universal content and value of the Gospel."

To those New Testament students who accept Dr. Knopf's critical conclusions, First Peter, Second Peter, and Jude will take on new interest and value from the help they give in connecting the Christianity of the second century with that of the Apostolic Age. In putting them to this use the author's comments on the text and especially the illustrative material he has collected will be found enlightening.

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ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN APOCALYPSES. The Schweich Lectures for 1913. F. C. BURKITT. Oxford University Press. 1914. Pp. viii, 80. 3s.

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENTS. (The Home University Library of Modern Knowledge.) R. H. CHARLES. Henry Holt & Co. Pp. 256. 50 cents.

Few subjects have so greatly increased in importance for the pursuit of historical theology as the study of that period which in-